

Message Text

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER TO USSR

REF: (A) MOSCOW 5304, (B) STOCKHOLM 827

1. ACCORDING TO SWEDISH PRESS, PRIME MINISTER PALME GAVE TWO PRESS CONFERENCES DURING CURRENT OFFICIAL VISIT TO SOVIET UNION. PALME REPORTEDLY SAID THAT WHILE THERE ARE NO BILATERAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN SWEDEN AND THE USSR, THERE ARE IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. "I AM ALL FOR OPENNESS ACROSS BORDERS AND I NEVER HESITATE TO CARRY ON A DIALOGUE," THE SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER WAS QUOTED AS SAYING.

2. INDEPENDENT DAILY DAGENS NYHETER CARRIED FOLLOWING PALME STATEMENT: "THE IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE DID NOT STOP BECAUSE THE (CSCE) AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN HELSINKI; UNCLASSIFIED

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ON THE CONTRARY, THE SIGNING IS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF AN

IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE....IN MY DISCUSSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER KOSYGIN, I HAVE PRESENTED MY VIEWPOINTS AS A SOCIAL DEMOCRAT. I DO NOT RPT NOT KNOW IF THE SOVIET UNION HAS SOFTENED ITS POSITION VIS A VIS PERSONS WISHING TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY...DURING THE COLD WAR, THE IDEOLOGICAL DEBATE WAS CARRIED ON IN CLICHES. THE FACT THAT WE NOW CAN HAVE A DIALOGUE IS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE."

3. THE SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER DESCRIBED THE ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH MOSCOW AS THE MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT OF HIS VISIT (SEPTEL).

4. SWEDISH PRESS ALSO CARRIED STATEMENT BY SOVIET PRIME MINISTER KOSYGIN THAT SWEDEN AND USSR "HAVE SIMILAR OR IDENTICAL STANDS" ON MANY KEY ISSUES, AND CITED SPECIFICALLY THE TWO NATIONS' POSITIONS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA AS BEING "ANTI-IMPERIALISTIC, ANTI-AGGRESSIVE, AND PEACEFUL." KOSYGIN AGREED WITH PALME THAT THERE WERE NO BILATERAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND SAID SOVIETS HAVE "VERY POSITIVE ATTITUDE" TOWARDS SWEDISH NEUTRALITY. HOWEVER, THE SOVIET LEADER NOTED THAT SOVIETS AND SWEDES DIFFER ON SOME POLITICAL QUESTIONS, ADDING THAT "MR. PALME HAS HIS OPINIONS AND WE HAVE OURS. WE DO NOT SHARE ALL OF EACH OTHERS' OPINIONS."

5. PALME REPORTEDLY SAID THAT EXIT VISAS FOR PERSONS WHO WISH TO LEAVE THE USSR COULD BE OBTAINED IF NEGOTIATIONS ARE CARRIED OUT QUIETLY. HE INDICATED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE QUESTIONS OF REUNIFICATION OF FAMILIES AND THE EMIGRATION OF JEWS BUT IT WAS UNCLEAR WHETHER HE HAD TAKEN UP THE SPECIFIC CASES OF VALENTIN AGAPOV AND FIVE OR SIX OTHER DIVIDED FAMILY CASES THAT HAVE BEEN PUBLICIZED IN THE SWEDISH PRESS IN RECENT MONTHS.

6. THE SWEDISH PRESS REPORTED THAT A MEETING WITH BREZHNEV HAD BEEN ENVISAGED ORIGINALLY BUT THAT BREZHNEV WAS TIRED AFTER THE RECENT PARTY CONGRESS AND GAVE IN TO PALME'S URGING THAT HE NOT TROUBLE HIMSELF WITH A MEETING.

7. SWEDISH PRESS COVERAGE OF THE PALME VISIT HAS FEATURED THE URGINGS OF OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS THAT PALME TAKE UP UNCLASSIFIED

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WITH THE SOVIET LEADERS SUCH QUESTIONS AS THE SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLES IN ANGOLA, HUMAN RIGHTS, DIVIDED FAMILITES AND THE EMIGRATION OF JEWS. IT IS PROBABLE THAT AFTER HIS RETURN, PALME WILL GIVE MORE EMPHASIS TO HIS EFFORT IN THE SOVIET UNION ON SOME OF THESE POINTS THAN TO SOVIET EXPRESSIONS OF WARM SATISFACTION WITH SWEDISH POLICIES.
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